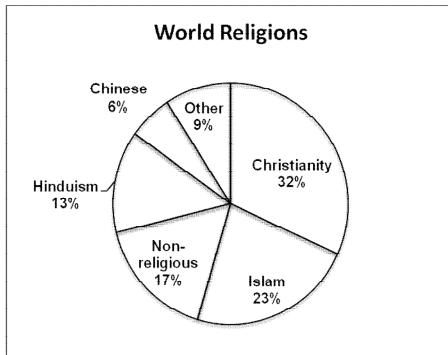


World Religions - Baptists

Overview

We continue our Apologetics studies with a look at other Christians who make up about 2 Billion



people or about 32% of the world population. Of these people about 1.1 Billion are Catholics and the remainder are Protestants.

What is a Protestant?

All protestant churches which are considered to be Christian have Catholic roots. Note that Martin Luther started this schism in 1517 and was followed by the **Church of England (1534)**, **Calvinism (1536)** and other Radical Sects (1520). Basically they “protested” abuses of the Catholic Church.

For the first 1500 years the Catholic Church was the only game in town. Unfortunately, in some ways it acted this way and abuses crept into the church. The abuses lead to schisms and splintering of the faith. There are literally hundreds of Protestant denominations – some say thousands – of them. For the purposes of this study we will examine the Baptists as being representative of Protestants.

What is a Baptist?

Its founding originates in 1520 coming from Catholicism with the Protestant Reformation in the 16th century. Baptists have no hierarchy or centralized control of activities and every church is autonomous. Baptists consider themselves more of a “denomination” rather than a church – because they are organized into independent local churches. Basically any group of believers can form a congregation or a church – which is why there are so many.

How do Baptists compare with Catholicism?

In the following, we compare Baptist beliefs with those of Catholics.

- **Beliefs of God:** Most Baptists believe in the Holy Trinity.
- **Eucharist/Lord’s Supper:** The Lord’s Supper is typically celebrated once a month and is considered as only a symbol.
- **Apostolic succession:** The Apostolic succession for its ministers has been broken. Ordination takes the range of formal seminaries to minimal preparation and women have also been ordained to the ministry.
- **Creed and Doctrines:** The Creed is the same as Roman Catholics although some doctrine differs. Baptism is only considered viable if done by immersion and they do not baptize infants.
- **Afterlife:** Most Baptists believe in some sort of after life and that most are saved through faith alone.
- **Deposit of Faith:** Contrary to Roman Catholics most Baptists interpret the bible literally and do not recognize any other source.
- **What distinguishes Catholics from this faith:** Allegiance to the Pope is not accepted. Most do not accept the Virgin Birth. An orthodox Baptist does not drink alcoholic beverages. There are no recognized sacraments as used by Catholics – other than baptism. True to Luther’s issues they also are suspicious of Catholic Saints and statues. They openly protheesyze – especially to those people weak in their personal faith. Baptists have four major points which makes them Baptist:
 1. Supremacy of the scriptures - literally
 2. Freedom of worship with no state interference
 3. Baptism of a believer and not infants
 4. Total individual church independence